

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI  
EASTERN DIVISION

LARRY COFFMAN, )  
 )  
 Plaintiff, )  
 )  
 v. ) No. 4:07-CV-398-AGF  
 )  
 ALAN BLAKE, et al., )  
 )  
 Defendants. )

**ORDER AND MEMORANDUM**

This matter is before the Court upon the application of Larry Coffman for leave to commence this action without payment of the required filing fee. See 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a). Upon consideration of the financial information provided with the application, the Court finds that plaintiff is financially unable to pay any portion of the filing fee. Therefore, plaintiff will be granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a). In addition, having carefully reviewed the file, the Court finds that the complaint, which includes a document titled "Second Amended Complaint," is legally frivolous and will be dismissed.

**28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), the Court may dismiss a complaint filed in forma pauperis at any time if the

action is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or seeks monetary relief against a defendant who is immune from such relief. An action is frivolous if "it lacks an arguable basis either in law or in fact." Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 325 (1989). An action fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted if it appears beyond doubt that the plaintiff can prove no set of facts in support of his claim which would entitle him to relief. Conley v. Gibson, 355 U.S. 41, 45-46 (1957); Jackson Sawmill Co. v. United States, 580 F.2d 302, 306 (8th Cir. 1978).

In reviewing a pro se complaint under § 1915(e)(2)(B), the Court must give the complaint the benefit of a liberal construction. Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972). The Court must also weigh all factual allegations in favor of the plaintiff, unless the facts alleged are clearly baseless. Denton v. Hernandez, 112 S. Ct. 1728, 1733 (1992); Scheuer v. Rhodes, 416 U.S. 232, 236 (1974).

### **The complaint**

Plaintiff, a civilly committed resident of the Missouri Sexual Offender Treatment Center ("MSOTC"), seeks monetary relief in this action against MSOTC employees Alan Blake, Jon Rosenboom, Janine Semar, and Linda Easton. Plaintiff is challenging the

constitutionality of Missouri's Sexually Violent Predators Act ("SVPA"), Mo. Rev. Stat. §§ 632.480-513, under which he is involuntarily confined.<sup>1</sup>

### **Discussion**

A favorable ruling on plaintiff's claim that Missouri's SVPA is unconstitutional would necessarily imply the invalidity of plaintiff's current confinement. Habeas corpus, however, is the proper mechanism for an inmate to challenge either the fact or length of his confinement. See Preiser v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 475, 490 (1973). Even if the Court liberally construed this case as a federal habeas corpus action, there is no indication that plaintiff has previously presented his claims relative to the unconstitutionality of § 632.480 to a Missouri state court. In the absence of exceptional circumstances, a state prisoner must exhaust currently available and adequate state remedies before invoking federal habeas corpus jurisdiction. Braden v. 30th Judicial Circuit Court of Kentucky, 410 U.S. 484 (1973). State remedies are ordinarily not considered exhausted if an individual may

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<sup>1</sup>Missouri's Sexually Violent Predators Act authorizes the civil commitment of persons who suffer from a mental abnormality that makes them more likely to engage in predatory acts of sexual violence if not confined in a secure facility. See Mo. Rev. Stat. 632.480, et seq.

